

Law 107–115), I hereby determine and certify that a waiver of section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act of 1992 (Public Law 102–511):

- is necessary to support U.S. efforts to counter international terrorism;
- is necessary to support the operational readiness of U.S. Armed Forces or coalition partners to counter international terrorism;
- is important to Azerbaijan’s border security; and
- will not undermine or hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan or be used for offensive purposes against Armenia.

Accordingly, I hereby waive section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act. You are authorized and directed to notify the Congress of this determination and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 28.

### **Remarks Honoring the 2001 National Basketball Association Champion Los Angeles Lakers**

*January 28, 2002*

Please be seated. Mr. Commissioner, good to see you, sir. Thank you for coming. I appreciate the Buss family members for being here. Thank you. Welcome to the East Coast. I’m so honored that Phil Jackson has come with players from the mighty LA Lakers championship team. I want to welcome you all the to White House. We’re thrilled you’re here. This is one way for us to congratulate you for being champs.

I want to thank the members of the California congressional delegation. I think we’ve got six Members here. Thank you all for coming. I know you’re as proud of the team as the people of California are.

I also want to thank the Boys and Girls Clubs of Atlantic City in New Jersey and Maryland for being here. I’m just as excited as you are for meeting these players. [*Laughter*] And thanks for coming.

I first want to congratulate Coach Jackson on learning how to win championships for different teams. He’s got to be a pretty remarkable guy to figure out how to win on a consistent basis. And so, Phil, congratulations for coming back to the White House.

I also want to thank the players. Being champs on the court means you’ve got to be champs off the court, as well. And I know these players understand that every time they do something, some kid is watching. Every time they say something, some kid is listening. And I want to thank the players who understand that with victory comes huge responsibility to encourage people to make the right choices in life. To me, that’s the true sign of a champ. I also want to thank the LA Lakers for being involved in your community.

People ask me all the time after the attack of 9/11, “What can I do to help? How can I participate in the war against terror?” And the answer is, you fight evil with acts of decency and kindness. You fight evil by doing something good. You fight evil by teaching a child that somebody loves them. You fight evil by being an LA Laker that convinces somebody to be a mentor for some child in inner-city Los Angeles who wonders whether there’s any love or hope in the world. That’s how you fight evil. And so I want to thank the organization and the players and the coach for assuming a position of responsibility in our society.

I was hoping that on his birthday, Mark Madsen would dance for us. [*Laughter*] I actually—as I said, I was hoping. [*Laughter*] I’m afraid the Secret Service might react violently if you did. [*Laughter*]

But I’m glad you all are here. It’s an honor to welcome champs to the people’s house. LA Lakers, good luck this year. Congratulations for two fabulous seasons. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to David Stern, commissioner, National Basketball Association; Jerry Buss, owner, Phil Jackson, coach, and Mark Madsen, forward, Los Angeles Lakers.

**Remarks Prior to Discussions With  
Chairman Hamid Karzai of the  
Afghan Interim Authority and an  
Exchange With Reporters**

*January 28, 2002*

**The President.** It's a great honor for me to welcome to the White House the Chairman of the Afghan Interim Authority, Hamid Karzai.

Mr. Chairman, welcome.

**Chairman Karzai.** Thank you very much.

**The President.** I also want to welcome the ministers of the Interim Authority who have accompanied him to Washington. Chairman Karzai is a determined leader, and his Government reflects the hopes of all Afghans for a new and better future, a future free from terror, free from war, and free from want. The United States strongly supports Chairman Karzai's interim Government. And we strongly support the Bonn agreement that provides the Afghan people with a path towards a broadly based government that protects the human rights of all its citizens.

The Afghan people have already taken the first steps along this path by committing to rid their country of Al Qaida terrorists and remnants of the Taliban regime who supported the terrorists. Yet, even as the war against terrorism continues, the world has also begun to help the Afghan people win the peace they deserve.

The United States is committed to building a lasting partnership with Afghanistan. We'll help the new Afghan Government provide the security that is the foundation for peace. Today, peacekeepers from around the world are helping provide security on the streets of Kabul. The United States will continue to work closely with these forces and provide support for their mission. We will also support programs to train new police officers and to help establish and train an Afghanistan national military.

The United States is also committed to playing a leading role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Today I announce the United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation will provide an additional \$50 million line of credit for Afghanistan to finance private sector projects. This announcement

builds on the United States' pledge in Tokyo earlier this month to provide \$297 million this year to create jobs and to start rebuilding Afghanistan's agricultural sector, its health care system, and its educational system. Yet these efforts are only the beginning.

Two days ago, for the first time since 1979, an American flag was raised over the U.S. Agency for International Development's mission in Kabul. That flag will not be lowered. It will wave long into the future, a symbol of America's enduring commitment to Afghanistan's future.

Chairman Karzai, I reaffirm to you today that the United States will continue to be a friend to the Afghan people in all the challenges that lie ahead. Welcome to Washington.

**Chairman Karzai.** Thank you very much.

Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. Although we are here, as I mentioned in my meeting with you, invited by you, for which we are very grateful, but we are also here in a way to thank you and the American people for the great help that we were given to liberate our country once again, this time from terrorism from the Taliban. The Afghan people recognize this help. They know that, without this help, we would have still probably been under that rule. So thank you very much to you and, through you, to the American people.

Afghanistan is a good partner. It will stay a good partner. And I'm sure that the future of the two countries will be good, and a wonderful relationship should be expected to come in the future. Thank you very much for the help that you gave us during the Tokyo conference, and thank you for organizing that, as well, together with other co-organizers. And thank you for the help that you announced today. Afghanistan does need help in reconstruction. Afghanistan does need help in the rebuilding of its national army. And thank you very much for doing that, too.

I assure you, Mr. President, that Afghanistan, with your help and the help of other countries, friends, will be strong and will stand eventually on its own feet. And it will be a country that will defend its borders and not allow terrorism to return to it or bother it or trouble it. We'll be self-reliant. We'll